Let's Get Going!

Concrete pavements require fewer repairs than asphalt pavement. Fewer repairs mean fewer work zones and fewer traffic snarls.

Traffic congestion caused by roadwork can be attributed to one of two things: constructing new roads or maintaining current roadways.

Instead of concentrating on new construction to meet road-user demands, however, many agencies are fighting the never-ending battle to keep up with maintenance and repair of highways and roads.

The frequency of these repairs is directly related to the type of pavement on the ground.

Come on! *Congestion has been a part of the American life as long as roads have. So, why not reduce it at its source?*

The Test of Time

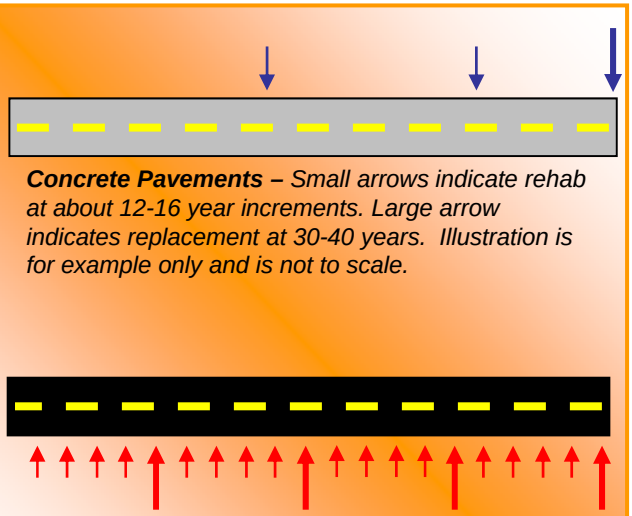
Consider this: **concrete pavements** do not require regularly scheduled maintenance. Current roadway designs and construction techniques make concrete pavements **require relatively low maintenance** during the life of the pavement.

In stark comparison, lower-quality pavements require regular maintenance every 2 to 4 years to correct rutting, cracking, potholes, and other problems.

In addition to the routine maintenance and repairs, lower-quality pavements also need to be resurfaced about every 8 to 14 years.

Concrete pavements typically need minor maintenance after about 12 to 16 years, but usually will not need to be resurfaced until 30 to 40 or more years.

The result? With concrete, there are fewer lane closures and work zones, **decreasing congestion**, **fuel consumption, and** the risk of **work zone accidents**.



Concrete Pavements – *Small arrows indicate rehab at about 12-16 year increments. Large arrow indicates replacement at 30-40 years. Illustration is for example only and is not to scale.*

Asphalt Pavements – *Small arrows indicate maintenance every 2-4 years. Large arrows indicate resurfacing at 8-14 years. Illustration is for example only and is not to scale.*

Pay Now and Pay Later?!

American drivers support our national highway system through taxes, so one sad truth is that we may often be paying for inadequate pavements. Many state and local agencies, in pursuit of low-cost road building options, turn to designs with lower initial costs. However, pavement performance studies show that concrete pavements last longer on average and withstand today's traffic and trucks better. Furthermore, with **rising oil prices**, it currently costs about the same to build a more durable concrete roadway.

Americans will spend **$54 billion** per year for **vehicle repairs** caused by bad roads. Not only do deteriorated roads cost significant dollars for vehicle repairs, they also impact safety.

So, the next time you're stuck in traffic, look around for some of these common pavement problems. Then, let your public officials know that you want quality pavements that last.

Shoving: *Caused by heavy traffic stopping and starting on the thin pavement layers common in pavements that don't use concrete; this deformation can cause substantial damage to vehicles.*

Rutting: *Deformation under the wheel paths in pavements that don't use concrete. Water-filled ruts can cause vehicles to hydroplane at high speeds.*

Potholes: *Degradation caused by a combination of the freeze-thaw cycling and traffic. Potholes may cause extreme damage to vehicle suspension and are costly to repair.*

Surface Cracking: *Degradation resulting from cycles of heating and cooling; Such cracking causes a rough ride.*

References

1. "Potholes and Politics – How Congress Can Fix Your Roads", Environmental Working Group, September 1997.
2. "Federal-Aid Highway Length – 2004 – Miles By Type of Surface", FHWA, HM31, October 2005.

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